



American Society for Nutrition
Excellence in Nutrition Research and Practice

November 20, 2012

President Barack H. Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama,

The American Society for Nutrition (ASN) congratulates you on your recent re-election to the Presidency of the United States of America. ASN is a not-for-profit, professional scientific society dedicated to bringing together the world's top researchers to advance our knowledge and application of nutrition. Our Society has nearly 4,700 members in the United States and around the world, working throughout government, clinical practice, academia and industry, to conduct research that helps all Americans to live longer, healthier and more productive lives. As you move forward in your efforts, we offer our Society as an independent resource with expertise in nutrition science.

ASN greatly appreciates your understanding of the importance of basic research, and we applaud your efforts to sustain funding for research and prevent devastating cuts to our nation's investments in research and innovation. We enthusiastically support your pledge to advance science, technology and innovation, and join you in urging Congress to maintain the federal commitment to research, as nutrition research dramatically improves the quality of life for Americans and people around the world each day. Our Society also commends the Administration's continued commitment to proactively address childhood obesity. ASN hopes that your Administration will use the next four years to continue to stress the importance of nutrition and nutrition research, and offers the following suggestions to do so and to leave a lasting legacy of nutrition prioritization beyond the current Administration.

ASN urges the Administration to establish a senior level position in the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy or as an Assistant Secretary to serve as the federal government's overall coordinator of nutrition-related initiatives. This individual would serve as a liaison to the private sector and across government agencies. This "nutrition czar" would ideally be a distinguished scientist in the field of nutrition science.

To cover the full spectrum from prevention to treatment, we believe greater coordination of nutrition policy, research and programs at leadership levels across the federal government should occur. Nutrition work currently takes place across multiple departments, including the Department of Health and Human Services; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. ASN proposes that an Inter-agency Nutrition Working Group be established to allow for increased harmonization of and more effective nutrition initiatives.

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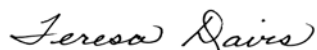
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We also urge the Administration to convene a broad dialogue on the nutrition issues our nation faces, such as a White House Summit on Food and Nutrition. An event such as this has not been conducted since the Nixon Administration and is needed now given the complex nutrition issues currently affecting our society. ASN would be happy to work with the Administration and Let's Move! representatives to engage attendees and generate a public platform for discussion of health and wellness issues related to nutrition. ASN is uniquely positioned to foster an open dialogue on nutrition-related topics between academia, clinicians, government, and industry. We offer ASN's Scientific Sessions and Annual Meeting (which will be held on April 20-24, 2013 in Boston, Mass.) as a potential venue for such an event. Nearly 3,000 nutrition science leaders and researchers from around the globe participated in last year's Annual Meeting, which showcased five days of comprehensive, unparalleled presentations given by the world's top leaders in nutrition.

The American Society for Nutrition (ASN) stands ready and welcomes opportunities to assist you and your Administration on nutrition-related initiatives and issues as they arise. Please feel free to contact Dr. John E. Courtney, ASN's Executive Officer, [301-634-7078; jcourtney@nutrition.org] if we may provide additional information or be of assistance in pursuit of our common goals to improve the health and wellbeing of all Americans.

Warm regards,



Teresa A. Davis, Ph.D.
2012-2013 President

Cc: Mr. Sam Kass, Senior Policy Advisor for Healthy Food Initiatives